

# The Korea Times

\*\*\* CITY EDITION

Established 1950, No. 22534

[www.koreatimes.co.kr](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr)

FRIDAY-SUNDAY, JANUARY 19-21, 2024

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## Space R&D body vows to support new space agency

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Korea Aerospace Research Institute (KARI) will give its full support to help the new space agency, which will be launched in May, get into place quickly, its president said Thursday.

"When the Korea Aerospace Administration (KASA) is launched in May, the agency will lead the aerospace sector in Korea, and we will be positioned underneath it as an executing agency. If KARI's personnel and systems are necessary for the organizational structure of KASA, it would be appropriate for KARI and other institutions to actively participate in its establishment," KARI President Lee Sang-ryool said during a press conference

in Seoul.

"It would also be a natural transition for KARI's staff to move to KASA. I don't think KASA needs to fill all the positions it has set as targets when it launches in May. Even when we conduct large projects, we don't need many people in the initial system design stage. However, I believe it is right to provide as much support as possible to help KASA find its footing quickly and progress gradually," Lee added.

KASA will start playing an administrative role in the country's space sector in May as the National Assembly provided a legal basis for its establishment by passing a revision to the Space Development Promotion Act early this month.

Once KASA is established, it will take on the role previously held by

KARI in the aerospace sector, formulating national strategies and basic plans and turning these established plans into national projects. KARI will be responsible for proactively developing new technologies that will be needed in the future, according to the president.

"KARI will focus more on the technology research and development sector and KASA will concentrate on the space industry and space security that we have been handling. We will focus on carrying out proactive research on future new technologies," he said.

He revealed that KARI will research future technologies such as space solar power, in-orbit servicing, space debris capture technology and, even further, establishing factories in space, living on other planets

and mining space resources.

Additionally, he said that KARI will focus on supporting the enhancement of industrial competitiveness in areas such as urban air mobility, high-altitude drones, next-generation launch vehicles, high-function satellite components and exploratory spacecraft.

Sharing the agency's plan for this year, Lee said KARI will begin assembly of a Nuri space launch vehicle in the second half of 2024 as it is scheduled for its fourth launch next year.

"In the second half of this year, we will start assembly of the space launch vehicle scheduled for the fourth launch next year. There will be launches every year from 2025 to 2027," he said.

He added that a company will



Lee Sang-ryool, president of Korea Aerospace Research Institute (KARI), speaks during a press conference at a restaurant in Gwanghwamun, central Seoul, Thursday.

Korea Times photo by Baek Byung-yul

be selected in March to join in the development of launch vehicles for large-scale satellite launches and space exploration.